JESUS IS THE LAST ADAM

Luke 3:23, 38; Romans 12:5–21

JESUS IS THE LAST ADAM

The Son of God came to bring those spiritually dead to life.

JESUS CONNECTION

Jesus, the last Adam, overcame Adam's sin through a life of perfect obedience and His payment for sin on the cross. Through Jesus, we are declared right with God.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

MERCY – Choosing not to punish someone who deserves to be punished.

HEAD

What things were passed down to us through Adam? What things are given to us through Jesus?

Why does God have to punish sin? How did God give us mercy instead of punishment?

HEART

The Bible tells us that every person is a sinner (Romans 3:23), but Romans 5 says that when we believe in Christ through faith, we are justified. It means God declares us not guilty, once and for all—He no longer holds our sins against us. Does this truth change your ideas about how God responds to you? How could knowing this truth help when you do sin?

When someone hurts us, we often feel like they deserve to be punished for what they have done. We might want to hurt them in the same way they hurt us, yell at them, ignore them or refuse to help them. What are some ways we can, instead, offer mercy to others who have sinned against us or hurt us?

HANDS

Think of one or two people who have greatly hurt or offended you. Read the verses below and write down 1-2 ways the Bible tells us to respond when people hurt us.

- Luke 6:27-28, 35 says, "But I say to you who listen: Love your enemies, do what is good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you … but love your enemies, do what is good and lend, expecting nothing in return. Then, your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High. For He is gracious to the ungrateful and evil."

- Romans 12:17-21 says, "Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Give careful thought to do what is honorable in everyone's eyes. If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Friends, do not avenge yourselves; instead, leave room for God's wrath, because it is written, 'Vengeance belongs to me; I will repay, says the Lord.' But if your enemy is hungry, feed him. If he is thirsty, give him something to drink. For in so doing you will be heaping fiery coals on his head. Do not be conquered by evil, but conquer evil with good."

Pray that God will help you show mercy in those ways to the people on your list.

JOHN THE HERALD IS BORN

Luke 1:59–73a, 76–79

JOHN THE HERALD IS BORN

The Son of God came to bring those spiritually dead to life. Like John, God calls all Christians to point to Jesus' arrival.

JESUS CONNECTION

Zechariah believed and spoke about God's plan for his son, John, to prepare the people for the promised Savior.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

CONFIDENCE – Full trust and assurance in the reliability of a person or thing.

HEAD

Why was it difficult for Zechariah to believe that Elizabeth would have a son? What would it have looked like for Zechariah to show complete trust in God's plan?

What happened when Zechariah placed his full confidence in God's promises about his son, John?

HEART

Humanly speaking, there was no hope for Zechariah and Elizabeth to have a child (Luke 1:5–7), so at first, Zechariah doubted God's Word from the angel (Luke 1:18–20). How is doubt the opposite of confidence? Based on Zechariah's story (Luke 1:5–25, 57–80), how does confidence in God help us respond to doubt?

Confidence is about who or what we depend on. God wants us to learn to depend on Him. He wants us to "cast our burdens on Him because He cares for us" (1 Peter 5:7). Whom do you normally depend on? What would it look like to choose to show confidence (depend on) God? (*Examples: pray about your problems, ask for His peace, etc.*)

HANDS

Choose one of the options below:

1. The best way to build confidence in God is to focus more on who God is. Write down the qualities you see God display in the story of Zechariah. Which qualities will help you focus when you are tempted to doubt? Set a reminder on your phone (or write it on an index card) to read Luke 1:68 before bed every night this week to help you focus on who God is and what He's done for us.

2. Write down two ways that God has answered your prayers. What does it tell you about God that He answers prayer? Spend time thanking God for who He is and what He has done for you. If you've never told anyone how God answered your prayer, tell a friend or family member.

LESSON 41: AVAILABILITY
JESUS, THE DELIVERER, IS BORN

Luke 1:26–33, 51–55; 2:4–7

JESUS, THE DELIVERER, IS BORN

God's long-awaited Savior and Messiah is born—and His name is Jesus!

JESUS CONNECTION

The birth of Jesus fulfilled many Old Testament promises about the coming of the Messiah. Jesus was born in humble circumstances and chosen as the Servant who would lay down His life to save us from sin.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

AVAILABILITY – Being willing to do my part.

HEAD

Fill in any facts that the angel Gabriel told Mary about her role in the Savior's birth. (*Hint: some info may be missing.*)

- Who:
- What:
- Why:
- How:
- Where:

What are some ways the angel Gabriel described Jesus?

HEART

Mary didn't fully understand how God's plan would come about, but she was willing to move forward with God's plan. What one truth about God convinced her to make herself available (Luke 1:37)? How likely are you to want to know more before you make yourself available to others? To God? Why is knowing more *not* always helpful?

What keeps you from being available to others? (*Examples: lack of time, selfishness, fear, your age, etc.*) What are some ways you can overcome these obstacles?

HANDS

Choose two people (one at home or in your neighborhood and one at school, a sport or activity, church, etc.) this week. Carve out time to make yourself available to them by asking one question: "Is there anything I can do to help you right now?" Then, do that thing.

JESUS IS DEDICATED
Jesus is God's promise of hope to the nations.

JESUS CONNECTION
Simeon praised God when he saw Jesus because He recognized Him as the long-awaited fulfillment of God's promises to Israel. The Holy Spirit revealed to Simeon that, though many would reject Him, Jesus was the ultimate hope, not only of Israel, but of all who would receive Him (John 1:11-12).

LIFEWISE QUALITY
HOPE – Expecting God will do what is best in every situation.

HEAD
Having hope is about what we expect God to do, but it isn't always easy to have hope when we have to wait for God to work. How long had Simeon and Anna waited for the promised Messiah? How did God increase Simeon and Anna's hope as they waited?

What effect do you think seeing God's promised Messiah had on Simeon and Anna's hope? How might their response to Jesus that day have given hope to people in the temple?

HEART

God first promised to send a Savior to defeat sin and Satan in the Garden of Eden. God promised the people a Messiah for hundreds of years before He sent Jesus. God's people waited, expecting that God would send the Savior at the right time. Some continued to hope, like Simeon and Anna, while others became discouraged. Why can it be discouraging when God doesn't answer prayer or do what He has promised right away?

When God promises something, He always does what He says. Not only that, but He encourages us and reminds us of these promises and He fulfills them at exactly the right time. How can this fact give you hope?

HANDS

Without hope, people will become discouraged and can even fall into despair. But hope grows when we encourage each other with uplifting words and the promises God has given us in the Bible. This week, when you see someone who is struggling, take the opportunity to encourage them (out loud or in a text or note) and to remind them of God's promises and character.

JESUS AT THE TEMPLE

Jesus shows us the importance of loving God's Word and obeying God's will.

JESUS CONNECTION

As Jesus grew, He increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and with people. Each step of His life prepared Him to fulfill God's plan: to live a life of complete obedience, die on the cross for our sins and rise again in victory.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

WISDOM – Knowledge and skill for doing life God's way.

HEAD

What qualities does Luke say that Jesus developed as He grew up?

What specific things did Jesus do to gain wisdom from God?

HEART

Wisdom is not something we have naturally—it must be developed. What are some ways we can pursue wisdom? How could the people we hang out with affect whether or not we develop wisdom?

Write down the qualities James uses to describe worldly wisdom and godly wisdom in James 3:13-18:

> "Who among you is wise and understanding? By his good conduct he should show that his works are done in the gentleness that comes from wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your heart, don't boast and deny the truth. Such wisdom does not come down from above but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there is disorder and every evil practice. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peace-loving, gentle, compliant, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without pretense. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who cultivate peace."

Why is it important to know the difference between these two kinds of wisdom?

HANDS

God's wisdom comes primarily from reading the Bible, but knowing how to apply God's wisdom to the big questions we face every day can be challenging. Write down a question you have about God or how a follower of Jesus is supposed to live. Then, complete one of the options below:

1. Ask a trusted adult (a LifeWise teacher, pastor or youth leader from church) to help you answer your question
2. Use one of the online resources below to find what the Bible says about your question:
   - summit.org/resources
   - christiananswers.net
   - crossexamined.org

JESUS IS BAPTIZED
True repentance is necessary for the Christian life.

JESUS CONNECTION
Jesus completely obeyed God and identified with sinners by being baptized like sinners were baptized. His baptism points to His death on the cross and resurrection from the grave.

LIFEWISE QUALITY
WHOLEHEARTEDNESS – Complete dedication in everything I do.

HEAD
What did John the Baptist call God's people to do? What was their baptism a picture of?

Jesus chose to be baptized even though He lived a sinless life. Why?

HEART
The Bible is clear that God is perfectly holy. Even one sin is a serious offense against Him, which is why we desperately need a Savior. But that is often not how we think of our sins. What are some ways we are tempted to excuse or make light of sin in our lives?

When we sin, the Bible calls us to repent. The word *repent* means that, through the work of God's Spirit, we have a complete change of mind, we feel genuine sorrow over our sin and reject it, and we turn to pursue God's way wholeheartedly. What would it look like for you to turn completely away from an ongoing sin in your life to live God's way?

HANDS

Choose one option below:

1. Living wholeheartedly is not easy. Think of 1–2 areas (an activity, chores, homework, relationships, etc.) where you are tempted to live half-heartedly or do the bare minimum instead of giving your all. For each area, write down what it would look like for you to be more wholehearted this week. Then, ask God to help you be wholehearted in this area and choose to follow through with it.

2. Write down something that you struggle with that the Bible points out as sin. What does the Bible say you should replace this sin with? Why? Confess your sin to God and ask for His help to turn away from sin and live God's way instead. Write down at least two ways that you can wholeheartedly walk after God in this area instead of walking toward sin.

   Example:
   - **My sin:** Treating others unkindly.
   - **Replacing sin with:** kindness in what I do and say.
   - **Why:** Because Jesus has treated me kindly.
   - **How:** I will ask God's Spirit to give me the power to be kind, I will memorize Ephesians 4:32 to remind myself to be kind, I will choose to treat others the way I want to be treated.

   - My sin:

   - Replacing sin with:

   - Why:

   - How:

JESUS IS TEMPTED

Luke 4:1–13

JESUS IS TEMPTED

Jesus overcame temptation through the power of God's Word.

JESUS CONNECTION

Jesus was sent into the world to do what Adam could not. Because Jesus overcame temptation and was fully obedient to the Father, He is worthy to undo the consequences of Adam's sin and bring blessing to all people (Gen. 12:3). Jesus' life of obedience led Him to the cross, where He conquered sin, death and Satan.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

SELF-CONTROL – Not acting carelessly on my own impulses, emotions and desires.

HEAD

What does Satan tempt Jesus to prove?

What does Jesus' response to Satan teach us about the importance of God's Word?

HEART

Ephesians 6:17 describes God's Word as a sword that we have been given to fight temptation, just as Jesus did. How can memorizing God's Word and speaking it out loud when we are tempted to sin help us obey what God says?

Satan tempted Jesus to take what He wanted instead of waiting for God's timing. Sin often tempts us to take shortcuts to get what we want without walking the path God has called us to. But Galatians 5:23 says that the Spirit of God gives us self-control. How would self-control help us to stay in step with God's plan?

HANDS

Choose one option below:

1. Temptations come in many forms:
    - Physically (to overeat or avoid exercise, to focus on our—or other people's—physical appearance)
    - Emotionally (to worry, to doubt our value, to respond in anger)
    - Mentally (to believe or spread rumors, to refuse to be teachable, to cheat or lie)
    - Spiritually (to doubt God, to continue in a sin, to fear being known for following Jesus)

    1 Corinthians 10:31 says, "No temptation has come upon you except what is common to humanity. But God is faithful; He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation He will also provide the way out so that you may be able to bear it." Write this verse on a piece of paper or keep it in a note on your phone, and when you feel tempted, read the verse out loud and ask God to help you bear it, as He promised He would.

2. When we are controlled by our impulses, emotions and desires, we lack self-control. Developing self-control is a clear mark of maturity, and something each of us should strive for. In each area below, write down what a lack of self-control could look like and 1–2 ways you can practice self-control. (*Hint: we can always pray that God will help us in every area!*)
    - Posting on social media
    - Dealing with a difficult friend or classmate
    - Having a bad day

LESSON 46: HUMILITY
JOHN POINTS TO JESUS
John 1:29–34; 3:25–36

JOHN POINTS TO JESUS
Significance is finding joy in Christ's significance, not our own.

JESUS CONNECTION
John said he was like the groom's friend at a wedding. His role as a friend was to step aside and take joy in the groom's wedding. Jesus was the groom. He came from Heaven to give His life for His bride—those who receive His Word and believe in Him.

LIFEWISE QUALITY
HUMILITY – Refusing to think of myself as more important than I am.

HEAD
John identified Jesus as the "Lamb of God." What significance did this term have for the Jewish people?

Some of John the Baptist's followers were worried that Jesus was gaining more followers than John. How did John respond to them?

HEART

Humility is always built on an accurate view of God and of ourselves. John knew that his purpose was to serve others by pointing them to Jesus, the promised Messiah, rather than himself. How does seeing God for who He really is help us remain humble? In what ways might God be calling you to humbly serve others?

Desiring praise and positive attention is normal and healthy for our self-worth. But if we focus too much on the opinions of others, we can become prideful and think too much of ourselves. How can seeing ourselves as God does help us keep a healthy balance? What is the difference between accepting praise with humility and accepting praise pridefully?

HANDS

Choose one option:

1. Pride is the opposite of humility, and it takes many forms. Look at the list below and choose one or two areas where you struggle the most with pride. For each area, write one or two ways that you can choose to respond more humbly and ask God to help you to respond in those ways.
    - Fault-finding
    - Harshness with others
    - Focusing on how we look to others on the outside
    - Defensiveness
    - Need for special attention
    - Overlooking others
    - Disrespect in approaching God

2. The more we focus on Jesus and His plan, the less we focus on ourselves. Identify one area in your life where you could humbly step aside and direct the attention of others to God or other people who deserve recognition. Write two specific ways you can do this in the next week.

LESSON 47: LOYALTY
JESUS CALLS HIS DISCIPLES

Luke 5:3–11, 27–32

JESUS CALLS HIS DISCIPLES

The call to follow Jesus is a call to invite others to do the same.

JESUS CONNECTION

Jesus came into the world to call sinners to repentance and to lay down His life on their behalf. Likewise, as His followers, we are to tell others about Jesus and call on them to turn from their sin and trust in Jesus.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

LOYALTY – Choosing to stay committed, devoted and faithful to someone.

HEAD

What was Simon Peter's reaction when he saw Jesus' miracle and realized that Jesus was the Messiah?

Jesus told the Pharisees that He did not come to heal the healthy, but the sick. Whom did Jesus come to call to repentance?

HEART

Loyalty is earned, not assumed. A person proves they deserve our commitment by their character or behavior. Jesus called very different men to be His disciples, but they all saw Him as the one worth following. And as they served together with Jesus, they learned to be loyal to each other by His example. How does knowing Jesus help you be loyal to Him and to others?

It's hard, even impossible, to be fully loyal to two things at the same time. Eventually, they will come into conflict, and we will have to choose. What specific things (thoughts, behaviors or people) are keeping you from being fully loyal to Jesus right now? What would it take for you to choose Jesus over those things? What would it cost?

HANDS

What are some challenges or opposition that you face within your family, circle of friends or environment if you follow Jesus completely?

Read the verses below and write how this might help you to remain loyal to God when others are not.

- Matthew 5:10–11 "Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for the kingdom of Heaven is theirs. "You are blessed when they insult you and persecute you and falsely say every kind of evil against you because of me."

- Mark 8:34–3 "Calling the crowd along with His disciples, He said to them, "If anyone wants to follow after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life because of Me and the gospel will save it. For what does it benefit someone to gain the whole world and yet lose his life? What can anyone give in exchange for his life?"

JESUS REVEALS HIS POWER
Jesus' teaching and miracles reveal His divinity.

JESUS CONNECTION
From the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry, the people recognized that He was different. Jesus taught with authority and performed miracles to fulfill the purpose of His earthly ministry and show that He is the Son of God.

LIFEWISE QUALITY
COMPASSION – Recognizing the suffering of others and taking action to help.

HEAD
What did Jesus show power and authority over in Mark 1?

What motivated Jesus to heal the man with leprosy? How did Jesus choose to heal him? Why is this so significant?

HEART
Why is it important to have both feelings of compassion for others and display acts of compassion toward others?

What types of people are more challenging for you to show compassion to? How might the fact that Jesus died for all people—regardless of social class, race or attitude—encourage you to help others who are suffering?

HANDS

Do one of the following options:

1. How do you justify not showing compassion to others? (Not enough time, it's someone you don't like very much, etc.) Think of someone you don't understand or struggle to show compassion to. Ask God to give you compassion like His for that person. Write down 2–3 ways you can show that person compassion and ask God to help you to do those things this week.

2. It can be hard to show compassion if we don't know much about what someone else is facing. But there are lots of good resources to help us be prepared. Choose one of the situations below, and go to the link to learn more about how to show compassion to someone going through this situation. Then, apply what you learn by showing compassion to someone you know who struggles with that issue.
    - Death
        - Article: elesplace.org/resources/teens/how-help-grieving-friend
        - Video: youtube.com/watch?v=I2zLCCRT-nE
    - Bullying
        - Article: mentalhealthfirstaid.org/2021/10/how-to-help-a-friend-who-is-being-bullied/
        - Video: teenvogue.com/video/watch/on-set-with-claudia-sulewski-6-ways-to-help-a-friend-who-is-being-bullied
    - Depression
        - Article: youthranch.org/blog/a-teens-quick-guide-to-supporting-a-friend-struggling-with-depression
        - Video: youtube.com/watch?v=UQCzR17HE0w

JESUS REVEALS HIS MISSION

Luke 4:16–31

JESUS REVEALS HIS MISSION

Jesus' mission wasn't without opposition—and neither will ours be.

JESUS CONNECTION

Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, the prophet Isaiah wrote of God's plan to send someone to bring good news and redeem His captive people. Jesus proclaimed that He is the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy—the promised Messiah. Jesus was rejected by the people, but it was through that very rejection—the cross—that He provided redemption from sin.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

TRUTHFULNESS – Choosing not to lie or deceive others to protect myself.

HEAD

According to Isaiah, what purpose was Jesus sent for?

The people were amazed by Jesus' teachings and wondered how a common man like Jesus could know such things. What truth did Jesus speak that made His own community want to kill Him?

HEART

Jesus saw and confronted the unbelief of His people. Have you ever realized you needed to speak truthfully to someone? Did you follow through? Why or why not?

Even when we speak the truth in love, some people will reject it. They may even reject us. How does knowing this fact make it difficult to share the truth? How does it help you to know that Jesus experienced rejection so that we could be accepted by God?

HANDS

God calls us both to tell the truth and to be loving, encouraging, gentle and respectful when we do (Ephesians 4:15, 4:29; 1 Peter 3:15). Why is it hard to do both at the same time? Which side do you struggle with more—telling only part of the truth or even a lie to keep someone from getting upset or telling the truth in a harsh and disrespectful way? Write down three ways you can practice godly truthfulness, no matter how others choose to respond and pray that God would help you do these things.

JESUS TEACHES ABOUT NEW BIRTH

John 3:3–18

JESUS TEACHES ABOUT NEW BIRTH

The new birth is God's supernatural transformation in the hearts of people.

JESUS CONNECTION

Jesus taught that new birth, not religious activity, is how a person receives eternal life. New birth is given from God the Father through faith in God the Son as a work of God the Spirit. Because of God's love, we are no longer condemned because of our sin, but we have been given eternal life in Christ.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

TEACHABLE – Being willing to change my mind and actions as I learn.

HEAD

From what John 3:14-17 says, how is someone able to be born again?

Why did God send His Son into the world?

HEART

Jesus told Nicodemus that he needed to come to God on God's terms, not his own. Nicodemus could not earn, buy or manipulate his way into God's kingdom. What are some ways you have tried to do this? How does the truth that eternal life is a gift we receive by faith turn this way of thinking upside-down?

What attitudes or beliefs do you have that sometimes stand in the way of your willingness to learn from God or others? How can you learn to be more open to the wisdom of others?

HANDS

Nicodemus was one of the greatest teachers in Israel, but he still showed a willingness to learn from Jesus. No matter how good we are at something, or how much we think we know, there is always more to learn. Think of something you already do well and someone you trust who does it even better. This week, ask someone to give you some ideas on how to build or improve on what you already know and practice.

JESUS TEACHES ABOUT LIVING WATER

John 4:7–14, 19–26, 28–29, 39

JESUS TEACHES ABOUT LIVING WATER

God's people worship in spirit and truth.

JESUS CONNECTION

Jesus told the Samaritan woman that a day was coming when worshipers would not focus on the physical location of worship, but would worship God in Spirit and truth. Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, our faith is no longer confined by geography. We worship Jesus as the Savior of the whole world wherever we are.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

LOVE – Choosing to support and care for others whether or not they deserve it.

HEAD

Why was the Samaritan woman surprised that Jesus spoke with her and asked her for a drink?

What was the living water that Jesus offered the Samaritan woman?

HEART

Jesus' interaction with the Samaritan woman shows how God's love reaches across cultural, relational and spiritual lines to those who need it most. Like us, this woman didn't deserve Jesus' love, but He gave it to her willingly anyway. Think about a time that you saw someone show this kind of love to you or another person. How would you describe this kind of love?

Romans 5:6–10 says, "For while we were still helpless, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly. For rarely will someone die for a just person—though for a good person perhaps someone might even dare to die. But God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

How does the fact that Jesus died for you when you were His enemy encourage you to love others who don't deserve it?

HANDS

Name two types of people that you have a difficult time getting along with or understanding. List two ways that you can show support and care for each type of person. Then, ask God to help you demonstrate His love to these people in the next week.

JESUS HEALS TEN LEPERS

Luke 17:11–19

JESUS HEALS TEN LEPERS

Thankfulness is the natural response to God's work in our lives.

JESUS CONNECTION

When ten lepers called out to Jesus for mercy, Jesus sent them to the priest, and they were healed. Jesus declared that the one leper who returned to thank and worship Him was saved by faith. Likewise, when we cry out in faith to Jesus, He saves us from our sin. This gift prompts a life of gratitude and worship.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

GRATITUDE – To appreciate what someone has done for or given to us.

HEAD

When were the lepers healed?

How did the leper who returned respond to being healed by Jesus?

HEART

The leper who turned back realized that his greatest need was not for his body to be healed, but for his spirit to be healed and cleansed from sin. Jesus did both. The leper showed great gratitude to Jesus because he understood the depth of Jesus' grace toward him. Can you think of a time when you deserved to be punished but instead were given grace (something good you didn't deserve)? Did you respond with gratitude?

How often do you take the time to show gratitude to God or others? Gratitude isn't always convenient. The leper was finally free of his disease and able to have a brand new life. But he took the time to stop, worship and show gratitude to Jesus. How does this encourage you to take the time to express gratitude?

HANDS

The more we understand the depth of Jesus' mercy toward us and all He has freely given, the more our gratitude toward Him and others will grow. List three specific things Jesus has given to you. Spend time thanking Him for these things through prayer. Then, list three things that others have given to you (love, time, resources, etc.) Send a card, text or call these people and thank them for what they have done.

JESUS HEALS A WOMAN AND RAISES A GIRL

Mark 5:21–43

JESUS HEALS A WOMAN AND RAISES A GIRL

Jesus calls us to have faith in His ability to heal both the physical and spiritual.

JESUS CONNECTION

The bleeding woman was considered unclean by Jewish law, so others refused to touch her to keep from becoming unclean, too. But when the woman touched Jesus, He didn't become impure; instead, His wholeness healed her illness completely. This is just what Jesus has accomplished for us on the cross. Through faith in Jesus' death and resurrection, we are made right with God, declared "not guilty" of sin and our sin and shame is removed.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

KINDNESS – Being considerate, generous and compassionate towards others.

HEAD

How were Jairus and the bleeding woman different? How were they similar?

What did the bleeding woman do in order to be made well again? What did Jesus say really healed her?

HEART

Jesus could have let the bleeding woman disappear into the crowd unnoticed. How did her reputation and life change because of Jesus' kindness to her? In what ways could your kindness change someone's life today?

On the way to his home, Jairus was told his daughter was dead. In that moment of pain and doubt, Jesus came alongside Jairus and told him, "Don't be afraid, but believe." What does a kind act like this (i.e., encouraging someone, walking with them) do for us when life is hard?

HANDS

Think of someone you know (family, friend, classmate, neighbor) who is going through a difficult time. Spend some time praying for them. Write down three ways you can be considerate, generous and compassionate toward that person and put your ideas into practice this week.

JESUS HEALS A MAN AT BETHESDA

John 5:2–18

JESUS HEALS A MAN AT BETHESDA

Jesus' grace in our life empowers us to obey Him.

JESUS CONNECTION

The man at the pool of Bethesda had been disabled for many years. He had lost hope and given into despair, but when Jesus told him to pick up his mat and walk, he was healed and obeyed. In a similar way, sin has left us hopeless and in despair, but Jesus invites us to trust in Him and follow Him. When we do, our sin is removed and we can follow Jesus in a life of obedience.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

HOPE – Expecting God will do what is best in every situation.

HEAD

What was the disabled man placing all his hope for healing in? Why had he lost hope in being healed at all?

How did the disabled man respond when Jesus healed him?

HEART

Jesus sought out the disabled man twice. First to heal him, and then to warn him of the consequences of sin. How can the fact that Jesus pursued this man give you hope when you want to give up?

Jesus healed the disabled man, but not in the way the disabled man thought he would be healed. Why might what you think is best not always be God's plan for you? Some people lose their hope in God when life doesn't go the way they wanted it to. How can you still have hope when God's plan for you isn't what you wanted or thought would be best?

HANDS

It's easier to have hope when we face hard things if we have support from others. We can't heal anyone, but we can do simple things that offer hope. Bringing a meal to someone who is sick, asking someone how they are doing, writing an encouraging note or simply being with those who are struggling are all ways to give hope to those around us. Ask God to point you to someone who is struggling, with something big or something small, and do one practical thing to encourage them this week.

When we are uncertain about what will happen next, it is easy to lose hope. While we can't know the future, we can remember who helped us and how we managed in the past. This week, think of someone who encouraged you in the past (a friend or family member, even God) and make it a point to thank them (in person, by text, in a note, in prayer) for their help and encouragement.

JESUS HEALS A MAN BORN BLIND

John 9:1–7, 29–33, 35–41

JESUS HEALS A MAN BORN BLIND

Spiritual blindness is the result of not seeing Jesus properly.

JESUS CONNECTION

In the healing of the man who was born blind, Jesus revealed that He is the light who has come into the world. When we trust in Jesus, our sin and spiritual blindness is removed and we are able to see the light of the world in all His glory and beauty.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

RESPECT – Acting considerately toward people based on their God-given value and worth.

HEAD

What did the disciples think had caused the man's blindness? What did Jesus say was the reason?

Why were the religious leaders upset that Jesus had healed the man?

HEART

Every person has value and worth because God created us. Not only that, but He loves us so much that He sent Jesus to die on the cross for our sins. How would seeing people the way God sees them encourage us to treat all people with respect?

The religious leaders were so upset with Jesus that they acted disrespectfully. They ignored the miracle, threw the man out of the temple and refused to believe Jesus is the Son of God. Have you ever gotten upset with someone (or with God) and treated them as though they didn't matter? Why is it important to show respect even when you are upset?

HANDS

Our culture tends to respect power, money and influence. How do we treat people who are popular, rich or famous? How do we treat people who are poor, sick or can't help us in any way? For each person below, list one way you can treat them with respect and ask God to help you do that for them this week.

- A cashier
- The student council president
- Your least favorite teacher

JESUS TEACHES ABOUT DISCIPLESHIP

Matthew 5:13–16, 6:1–4, 7:19–24

JESUS TEACHES ABOUT DISCIPLESHIP

Following Jesus involves being salt and light to those around us.

JESUS CONNECTION

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught His followers what it meant to be His disciples—someone who has been transformed by faith in Jesus and who lives for Him. Just as Jesus came into the world to be light, we too are to live in the world as salt and light for Him.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

STEWARDSHIP – Using the gifts God has given me wisely without wasting them.

HEAD

What does Jesus mean when He says His people are to be salt in the world?

We identify a tree by the fruit it produces. How did Jesus use this picture to help us understand what it means to be Jesus' disciple?

HEART

We are often willing to serve and help others, but we also struggle to do it for the right reasons. It's much easier to *put on a show* to impress God or get others to praise us than it is to be" salt and light" to show God to the world. What would it look like for you to do each scenario to get attention for yourself? How would you do it if you were trying to point the attention to God?

- Volunteer at an animal shelter
- Give up your study hall to tutor a fellow classmate who is struggling with the homework
- Sing a solo or give a speech at the annual Veteran's Day program

Jesus says that the way we live is like the fruit a tree produces. Does having good behavior always mean our hearts are right with God? How does faith in Jesus change our hearts and, as a result, our actions?

HANDS

Jesus said He is the light of the world (John 8:12) and that His disciples are the light of the world (Matthew 5:14). Choose two of the places or situations below and think of 1-2 ways you can display the light of Jesus to those around you there.

- At home
- In the classroom
- With your friends
- In the school cafeteria

THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

Luke 9:57–62, 14:25–35

THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

Discipleship involves a total and costly commitment to following Jesus.

JESUS CONNECTION

Jesus taught that being His disciple comes at a cost. To be His disciple requires a clear and total commitment and will involve sacrifice. When we commit our entire lives to Jesus as His disciples, we emulate the one who laid down His life on our behalf for our salvation.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

COMMITMENT – Doing what I say I'll do.

HEAD

What things did people in Jesus' teaching prioritize over Jesus?

What does it mean to "consider the cost" before committing to do something?

HEART

What things do we tend to treat as more important than Jesus?

Jesus was so committed to saving us from sin that He died for us. The call to follow Jesus requires a wholehearted commitment that begins in the heart and changes how we live. He isn't content with a half-hearted commitment, emotional response or promises that we never follow through on. Is a wholehearted commitment to Jesus worth the cost? Why or why not?

HANDS

Choose one of the following options:

1. Jesus told the people that it was important to "count the cost" before they followed Him because there will be sacrifice involved in following Him. Write down 2–3 ways that following Jesus could cost you personally (i.e., losing friends, spending less time on a device, stopping a sinful behavior). Then, write down 2–3 things you would gain from fully committing to follow Jesus. Pray and talk to God about the things on your list. Ask Him to help you be fully committed to Jesus, no matter the cost.

2. Think of a group or organization that you are a part of (school, club, sports team, fine arts group, etc.). Write down some practical ways you can do something to show your commitment to that group. Pick 1–2 actions to follow through within the next week.

JESUS TEACHES ABOUT PRAYER

Luke 11:1–4, 9–13; 18:1–8

JESUS TEACHES ABOUT PRAYER

Jesus taught His disciples to pray with faith, persistence and dependence on God.

JESUS CONNECTION

Jesus taught us to pray with dependence on God, recognizing only He can supply our physical and spiritual needs, with faith in God, knowing He is our good and loving Father, and with persistence to God, remembering He is just. The death and resurrection of Jesus gives us access to the Father so that we can pray in faith.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

PERSISTENCE – Repeatedly practicing a good behavior until it's habit.

HEAD

What is the importance of Jesus teaching His disciples to pray to God as "Our Father"? How is He like an earthly father? How is He different?

What did Jesus prioritize in His prayer? What did He ask for? What didn't He ask for?

HEART

If we believe in Jesus' death and resurrection, we are part of God's family. According to Jesus, how can we expect God the Father to respond to us when we pray? Does that encourage you to be persistent when you pray? Why or why not?

Our persistence in prayer will always depend on whether we see God as good and willing to provide for us. But Paul said that if God has already given us Jesus, "How will He not also with Him grant us everything?" (Rom. 8:32). How does God's gift of Jesus prove that He is a good God who is ready to hear our prayers?

HANDS

Jesus taught us the Lord's Prayer so we would have an example of how to approach God and what we should ask Him for. Go through each section of the prayer (listed below) and write down 1–2 specific things you can pray to God or ask God for in that area. Then, pray for those things every day this week.

> Father, your name be honored as holy.

> Your kingdom come.

> Give us each day our daily bread.

> And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive everyone in debt to us.

> And do not bring us into temptation.

JESUS TEACHES ABOUT TREASURE

Luke 12:15–28, 31–34

JESUS TEACHES ABOUT TREASURE

Jesus teaches on what it means to live generously.

JESUS CONNECTION

When Jesus taught His disciples about money and possessions, He warned about hoarding treasure instead of living with generosity. Jesus left His place of splendor with the Father and lived on Earth without wealth so that He could complete the work the Father had given Him to do: establishing God's kingdom.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

CONTENTMENT –Being satisfied with what God has given and not desiring anything more.

HEAD

What did Jesus say the ravens and the wildflowers teach us about God's provision?

What does Jesus' statement, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also," mean?

HEART

While Jesus lived on Earth, He lacked earthly wealth but lived in a way that was spiritually rich. The foolish man in the parable had great earthly wealth, but was not "rich toward God." What does it mean to be "rich toward God"? How does the way (greedy or content) we use our resources (time, talents, money) show how much we trust God?

How does the truth that God provides all we need spiritually (sending Jesus to free us from sin and the Holy Spirit to help us live for Him) and physically (Luke 12) encourage you to live with contentment, even in hard situations?

HANDS

Choose one of the following options:

1. To treasure something means that it is very important to us. We can recognize what we treasure by thinking about what we aren't willing to lose, what we make sacrifices to have or protect and what we spend most of our time on. Make a list of 5–10 things you treasure (people, your skills or resources, etc.) and rank them from most important (1) to least important (5 or 10). Be as honest as you can. Does God even make your list? According to your list, how much do you treasure Him? Pray and ask God to help you make Him your greatest treasure.

2. When we are content with what God has given us, we are much more willing to give our time, money, talents and more because we trust Him to provide all we need. Think of 2–3 ways that you can give more intentionally, at home or school or in your community, and try to put them into practice this week.

LESSON 60: CONFIDENCE
THE GOOD SHEPHERD

John 10:7–18

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Jesus' love and compassion leads to a fulfilled life.

JESUS CONNECTION

Jesus is the Good Shepherd, sent by the Father to lay down His life for the sheep so that they might have life. Because of Jesus' death on the cross and resurrection from the grave, we have abundant life in Him and through Him.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

CONFIDENCE – Trusting in God's goodness and character no matter what.

HEAD

In what ways does the Good Shepherd care for His sheep? How do His sheep respond?

Whom do the thief and wolf in the story represent? What is their plan for the sheep?

HEART

Jesus died on the cross, was raised to life and sent the Holy Spirit so give us the power to live a good and satisfying life for Jesus. What things in your life (good or bad) do you need to get rid of in order to help you do this?

When sin threatened to separate us from God forever, Jesus laid down His life to save us. How does the fact that you are cared for by such a faithful and protective Shepherd help you to have confidence every day?

HANDS

The Shepherd spends so much time with the sheep that they always recognize His voice. Because of this close relationship, the sheep confidently listen to and follow wherever the Shepherd leads. The more time we spend with God—reading and learning about His Word, talking to Him and worshiping Him—the more we will be able to discern His call and move forward with confidence, too. Read the suggestions below and choose to do one every day (ideas can be repeated) for the next week:

- Read a chapter in the book of Mark
- Play a Christian worship song on your device and think about what it means. (If you don't know of any artists, try "CityAlight worship songs")
- Use the acronym P.R.A.Y. to talk with God
    - P — Praise God for who He is
    - R — Repent of your sins (confess your sin, turn from it in your mind and heart)
    - A — Ask for God's help
    - Y — Yield (hand over) control of your life and plans to God
- Draw or doodle the story of the Good Shepherd
- Go to a church youth group with a friend or family member

JESUS CASTS OUT A DEMON

Luke 8:26–39

JESUS CASTS OUT A DEMON

Jesus has power and authority over evil spirits.

JESUS CONNECTION

When Jesus approached the man who was possessed by demons, even the demons recognized His authority. Jesus drove the demons out of the man, but when the people saw His authority, they were afraid and drove Him off. Jesus would later demonstrate His authority over sin and evil in a greater way through His crucifixion and resurrection. While many reject Him now, one day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess Jesus is Lord (Phil. 2:9-11).

LIFEWISE QUALITY

HOPE – Expecting God will do what is best in every situation.

HEAD

Describe the man from Gerasenes before and after Jesus healed him.

How did the people of Gerasenes respond when Jesus cast the demons into the herd of pigs? Why did they beg Jesus to leave their region?

HEART

The demon-possessed man had no hope. Jesus showed His great power over sin and Satan by healing him, and this man's life was forever changed. How does knowing that Jesus has power over sin and Satan help you to believe that God will do what is best in every situation?

The people from Gerasenes placed their hope in their possessions. Even though they witnessed a miracle, they couldn't see that Jesus offered an incomparably greater hope. Have you ever put your hope in someone or something and been disappointed? (What people and things have you placed your hope in and been disappointed?) Why are we often tempted to put our hope in these people and things instead of in God?

HANDS

The world is full of messages that say there is no reason for hope. But even in areas that are hard to face (i.e., sin, sickness, death and climate or cultural concerns), our hope will grow when we are anchored in the truth that Jesus has power over all things. Think of 1–2 areas that concern you most right now. For each area, write out (or record on your device) the following statement: "Jesus has power over [fill in your area of concern], so I have hope that God is at work right now, doing what is best."

Think of someone you know who, like the man in the story, is facing a difficult problem that they can't solve or handle on their own. Think of a way you can share with them the hope we have because Jesus can handle even our worst problems and try to do that this week.

JESUS FEEDS A MULTITUDE

John 6:4–14

JESUS FEEDS A MULTITUDE

Jesus teaches us to meet the physical and spiritual needs of others.

JESUS CONNECTION

When the Israelites were hungry in the wilderness, God provided manna from Heaven. Jesus not only provides bread from Heaven but speaks of Himself as the bread who gives life to the world.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

COMPASSION – Recognizing the suffering of others and taking action to help.

HEAD

Why does Jesus ask His disciples to feed the people? How might this miracle increase the disciples' faith?

What kind of bread did the crowd want the next day? What kind of bread did Jesus offer them instead?

HEART

God saw us in our helpless state and moved toward us. He sent Jesus to meet our deepest need—to be saved from sin so we can have a right relationship with God—and He promises to meet every other need too. Why is it dangerous to only ask God to meet our physical needs? What does it look like when someone is more satisfied with Jesus than the things of this world?

Jesus taught the disciples the importance of trusting God to help them meet people's physical needs and involved them in the process. What are some reasons you fail to show compassion to others? Are any of these reasons valid?

HANDS

The first step in showing compassion toward others is simply being aware of what is going on around us. When you are out in public (school, the store, extracurricular activities), ask God to help you recognize the needs of others, understand how to help and act by meeting that need. It could mean picking up groceries that someone dropped, talking to a lonely neighbor or giving someone lunch money. It may be praying with a friend or cheering on a teammate who is having a rough practice. Look for 2–3 opportunities to show compassion this week.

JESUS WALKS ON WATER

Matthew 14:22–36

JESUS WALKS ON WATER

Jesus is in control over all of life's storms.

JESUS CONNECTION

Jesus demonstrated that He has sovereign power over nature by walking on water and calming the storm. Through His miracles, teaching and, most clearly, His death and resurrection, Jesus proved Himself to be worthy of our faith and worship. He alone is able to save.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

COURAGE – Boldly doing the right thing, even in difficult circumstances.

HEAD

What did Jesus show that He had power over?

How was Peter able to walk on the water? Why did he begin to sink?

HEART

Jesus was with Peter on the waves, but when Peter took his eyes off Jesus, he began to doubt Jesus' ability to steady him through the storm. When great difficulties come, what are you tempted to focus on instead of Jesus? Why do you think that is?

Courage comes with greater dependence on God. When we put our focus on God in the midst of a difficult problem and trust God to handle it, God will give us the courage to do what is right. Think of a difficult situation you have experienced or are going through right now. How could you show that you trust God to handle it? How can you step out courageously, doing what is right in the middle of this situation?

HANDS

Think of an area of your life where you could use more courage: standing up for yourself or a friend, giving a speech or playing a solo, refusing to give into peer pressure, telling a family member about Jesus, walking through an illness yourself or with a loved one, etc. Read the verses on courage below and pick one to memorize. Write it on a piece of paper where you will see it. Take time to read through it every day this week. Then, choose to take a step in courage and do that thing you have been too afraid to do.

- Isaiah 41:10 – Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will hold on to you with My righteous right hand.
- Psalm 27:1 – The Lord is my light and my salvation—whom should I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life—whom should I dread?
- 2 Timothy 1:7 – For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but one of power, love and sound judgment.

JESUS IS TRANSFIGURED

One day, Jesus' full glory will be displayed for all to see.

JESUS CONNECTION

At the Transfiguration, Jesus' glory was revealed more fully to Peter, James and John. The Transfiguration foreshadowed Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension (Luke 9:31) when He would depart and return to His place of glory. One day, Jesus will return in full glory to make all things new.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

DISCERNMENT – Being able to recognize what is true and false or right and wrong.

HEAD

How was Jesus changed, or transfigured, on the mountain? What did this reveal about Him?

Many Jewish people were questioning who Jesus was. How did this encounter with Jesus—everything the three disciples saw and heard—reveal His true identity?

HEART

The Jewish people wanted to know if Jesus was the promised Messiah, but they didn't compare what they saw Jesus do and teach with God's Word and how God Himself described the Messiah. God's Word is the best source we have to recognize what is true and false, right and wrong. When do you tend to look for answers apart from God's Word? Why do you think that is?

While He was on Earth, Jesus revealed His glory as the Son of God through His miracles and His teaching, but most people missed it. Even when He showed His three disciples His full glory, they didn't understand. Do you struggle to believe that Jesus is who He claimed to be? If you saw Him transfigured that day, do you think you would have believed?

HANDS

Choose one option below:

1. Because of AI and CGI programs, it is nearly impossible to recognize what is true and false or right and wrong. This week, pay close attention to the videos, advertising and photos you see. How do you know if the message is true or not? How does this message compare to what the Bible says? Discuss what you see and hear with a friend or trusted adult.

2. Think of an area of your life where you struggle to know what is true and false or right and wrong. Make plans to discuss that area with a trusted believer (LifeWise teacher, pastor or youth pastor at church) or type your question into one of the websites below. Read an article or watch a video that addresses your question and share what you learn with a friend or family member this week.
   - christiananswers.net
   - josh.org/resources/youth-family/answers-for-teens/

THE KINGDOM PARABLES

Matthew 13:1–9, 31–33, 44–46

THE KINGDOM PARABLES

Jesus' parables teach us what the kingdom of heaven is like.

JESUS CONNECTION

Jesus used parables to describe the nature of God's kingdom on Earth. The condition of our hearts determines how we receive word of the kingdom. For those with hearts like fertile soil, the Word yields incredible fruitfulness causing the kingdom to grow and extend into all of the world. When Jesus returns, we will experience His kingdom in all its fullness.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

RESPONSIBILITY – Taking ownership of my choices and behavior, including the consequences.

HEAD

Fill in the blanks about God's kingdom using Matthew 13:

- God's children have hearts that are like _____ soil and *produce fruit* (Matt. 13:1-9)
- God's kingdom starts with a tiny _____ that *grows* into a huge tree (Matt. 13:31-32)
- God's kingdom *spreads* like _____ worked through the dough (Matt. 13:33)
- God's kingdom is a *treasure* that is worth giving up _____ for (Matt. 13:44-46)

HEART

Read Matthew 13:18–23. The rocky and thorny soil represent people who hear the Word and accept it but do not grow in their faith or produce fruit. What keeps them from growing? How might these obstacles become an excuse for not participating in God's kingdom?

Jesus' parables are clear that God is fully responsible for the growth and spread of His kingdom. Its final success is not dependent on us. But God also calls us to participate in His kingdom. What kind of action or response are we responsible for in God's kingdom?

HANDS

Choose one of the following options:

1. When it comes to God's kingdom, we can't control what kind of soil someone else's heart has. But we are responsible to share about Jesus and allow the Holy Spirit to help us live in a way that shows His kingdom to people around us. Choose an attitude, a choice and a phrase that you regularly say that does not represent Jesus well and think of a positive replacement for each. Pray and ask God to remind you to choose the new options this week.

    - Attitude:

      Replace with:

    - Choice:

      Replace with:

    - Phrase:

      Replace with:

2. Being responsible means owning our own choices, actions and words. This is easy when what we did is good and may get us compliments or praise. But it's much harder when we make mistakes. This week, when you make a mistake (and you will!), choose to own up to what you did or said. If it was sinful, ask God to forgive you. And if you hurt someone else, go to them, apologize and offer to make it right.

THE PARABLE OF THE SONS

Luke 15:11–13, 17–32

THE PARABLE OF THE SONS

God's love and forgiveness extend to anyone who repents of their sin and self–righteousness.

JESUS CONNECTION

The Pharisees and scribes criticized Jesus for welcoming sinners and dining with them. In response, Jesus told a story of a father longing for and celebrating his wayward son's return. This story illustrates God's joy over sinners coming to repentance and trusting in Jesus, the Savior, who came to seek and save the lost.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

JOY – Having a cheerful response, regardless of my circumstances.

HEAD

What did the younger son do with his inheritance? Why did he return home?

How did the father and older son respond differently when the younger son returned home?

HEART

We tend to think that getting or doing whatever we want is the path to joy, but often we end up lost, broken, and far from God. What is something you wanted for a long time and finally got, only to find it didn't satisfy you as much as you thought it would? Why didn't it bring you the happiness you hoped for?

In Jesus' story, both sons were actually lost. The younger son sinned through disobedience, but the older son sinned by trusting in his own actions to save himself. Both were far away from God. Which son do you most identify with? How might this distance from God affect your ability to experience true joy?

HANDS

If possible, listen to the song "Better" by Pat Barrett, or read the lyrics below. Make a collage by drawing (or cutting out and gluing) pictures on a paper or poster of the things mentioned in the song that we believe will bring us joy. At the top of your paper, write "JESUS IS BETTER" in large letters. Hang the collage where you can see it every day to remind yourself that true joy is only found in Jesus.

"Better," Pat Barret

All the money that the world could hold
Mountains made of solid gold
Riches that could buy my dreams
You are better than all these things
The prettiest face to turn their eyes
Beauty that could hypnotize
The open doors that looks may bring
You are better than all these things
Your love is better than life
You are the well that won't run dry
I have tasted and I have seen
Oh, You are better than all these things
Power that could shake the moon
Most important one in the room
Status matched by only kings
You are better than all these things
Your love is better than life
You are the well that won't run dry
I have tasted and I have seen
You are better than all of these things
Being liked and loved by everyone
Approval that outshines the sun
Cheered by all who think of me
You are better than all these things
Your love is better than life
You are the well that won't run dry
I have tasted and I have seen
You are better than all these things
You are better than I can imagine,
Over, above what I seek
Better than I can imagine, Your love for me
You are better than I can imagine,
over, above what I seek in life
You are better than all these things

Comparison is a joy-killer. When the older son compared how his brother was treated (with a party) to how he was treated (all work, no party), he was angry, not joyful, that his lost brother was found. Think of someone you tend to compare yourself with or have been angry about the differences in how you were both treated. Every day this week, choose to pray for that person and ask God to help you celebrate with them instead of comparing yourself to them.

JESUS TEACHES DIFFICULT TRUTHS

John 6:52–69

JESUS TEACHES DIFFICULT TRUTHS

Jesus offers words of eternal life.

JESUS CONNECTION

Jesus' teachings about eating His flesh and drinking His blood were difficult to understand. Many turned away from Jesus because of these words, but it is in them that we find eternal life made known to us in Jesus' death and resurrection.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

FORTITUDE – Trusting God to give me strength to face hard things.

HEAD

How did Jesus' followers respond when He taught things that were difficult to understand? How does Peter's response demonstrate fortitude?

What did Jesus really mean when He told His followers they must "eat His flesh" and "drink His blood" to live forever?

HEART

The world often assures us that we "have what it takes" to face hard things, but the message of the cross is that we will never be strong enough without Jesus' help. Think of a time you tried to handle a problem on your own, only to find that you needed help. What made you think you could do it on your own? Looking back, how might trusting in God to give you strength have changed how you handled the situation?

In the midst of confusion and difficulty, Peter showed great trust in God. He acknowledged Jesus as God—the way to eternal life—and chose to stay with Him. How might recognizing Jesus' power and choosing to believe Him give you strength to face hard things?

HANDS

Choose one of the following:

1. Following Jesus' words can be difficult, especially when we don't understand them or feel like doing what He says. Which of the verses below do you find most difficult to follow? What might happen if you actually did what Jesus said? Every day this week, pray and ask God to give you the strength to do what that verse says. Share what you experience or notice with a LifeWise teacher or another follower of Jesus.
    - James 1:2 – Consider it a great joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you experience various trials.
    - Matthew 6:25 – Therefore I tell you: Don't worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Isn't life more than food and the body more than clothing?
    - Matthew 6:33 – But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you.
    - Matthew 5:43–44 – You have heard that it was said, "Love your neighbor and hate your enemy." But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

2. Psalm 73:26 says, "My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart, my portion forever." Think of an area where you tend to give up easily instead of showing fortitude, such as doing your homework, learning a new skill, beating a video game level or avoiding conflict with other people. Ask God to help you have the fortitude to keep going when you want to give up in that area, and commit to keep trying to do that hard thing, instead of giving up, every day this week.

JESUS RAISED LAZARUS

John 11:20–27, 32–37, 41–44

JESUS RAISED LAZARUS

Jesus grieves over death and foreshadows His own resurrection.

JESUS CONNECTION

When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, He showed that He has power over death. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life." Because Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead, we have full assurance that Jesus will one day defeat death forever and resurrect us from the dead.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

CONFIDENCE – Trusting in God's goodness and character no matter what.

HEAD

What did Martha say that displayed her trust in Jesus, even when she didn't fully understand His plan?

What did Jesus pray would happen as a result of raising Lazarus from the dead?

HEART

Read John 11:1-7, 11-15. Jesus knew Lazarus was sick but waited two days to travel to Bethany. What reasons does Jesus give for delaying the trip? How does His delay help you to trust in God's perfect timing when life is very difficult?

In John 11:26, Jesus declared that anyone who trusts in Him will never die. How does this truth give you confidence when you think about death?

HANDS

Choose one option below:

1. When things don't go well, we can lose confidence. We doubt our ability to handle new or difficult situations. But we can build confidence by facing those new or hard things and learning from our mistakes. In what areas do you lack confidence? Choose one area and write down 3 practical steps you can take this week to build your confidence. Ask God to increase your confidence and do each step.

2. Proverbs 3:5–6 says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not rely on your own understanding; think about Him in all your ways, and He will guide you on the right paths." We can easily put our confidence in things that aren't God. Make a list of 3–5 things you often trust in instead of God. Pray and ask God to help you notice when you rely on something other than Him this week and help you put your trust in Him.

JESUS ENTERS JERUSALEM

Luke 19:35–46

JESUS ENTERS JERUSALEM

Jesus came to restore true worship.

JESUS CONNECTION

When Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey, He fulfilled Old Testament prophecies about the coming Messiah and proclaimed He was the one who fulfilled them. The people praised Jesus, but they praised Him for the wrong reasons. In cleansing the temple, Jesus demonstrated how He would bring about true worship through offering His own body as a temple to be destroyed and then raised again.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

TEACHABLE – Being willing to change my mind and actions as I learn.

HEAD

Why did the people praise Jesus?

What did the people of Jerusalem fail to recognize about Jesus?

HEART

God's people had waited for thousands of years for the Messiah to come, but they didn't believe Jesus was that long-awaited Messiah because He wasn't what they expected. They wanted a king, but Jesus came to die humbly on the cross for sin. What are some ideas you have about who God should be or what He should do that keep you from believing in who Jesus says He is?

In Matthew 11:28-29, Jesus invited His hearers to be teachable, saying, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take up my yoke and *learn from me*, because I am lowly and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." What does Jesus promise those who come with a teachable heart? How willing are you to let someone (such as God or a parent, teacher or coach) correct you or give you direction on how to do something in the correct way?

HANDS

Choose one option below:

1. Being teachable is not the same as being tolerant. *Tolerance* means accepting all ideas or views without declaring one to be right or wrong. Being *teachable* means knowing there is a right answer and, if you discover you are wrong, being willing to change your thoughts, beliefs or actions to match the truth. For each of these scenarios, think of a teachable response and ask God to help you put it into practice:

    - Your teacher corrects your answer in front of the whole class

    - The coach (or instructor) says you need to change how you do a skill or you won't advance

    - The principal challenges you for being disrespectful to a classmate in the lunchroom

2. Because of sin, every person will struggle to develop a teachable heart. We want to do things our own way, and we refuse to believe we are wrong, especially when it comes to having a relationship with God. Write down three actions you can do that would show you are ready to learn from Jesus. (*Examples: reading the Bible, memorizing verses, going to church or youth group, praying, etc.*) Choose one and commit to doing it every day this week.

JESUS IS QUESTIONED

Jesus models what it means to live under the authority of God's Word.

JESUS CONNECTION

The religious leaders questioned Jesus to trap Him in His words, but each time, Jesus answered them from the authority of God's Word, and they could not dispute what He said. Jesus is the Word of God who came to reveal God perfectly to us. He has all authority in Heaven and on Earth.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

DISCERNMENT – Being able to recognize what is true and false or right and wrong.

HEAD

What two reasons does Jesus give for why the Sadducees don't understand God's Word?

How does the scribe respond when Jesus answers his question?

HEART

When the Jewish leaders asked Jesus questions, He began His answers by stating what the Bible said. Why is it important to know what God's Word says when you're trying to understand what is true and false?

The religious leaders were blinded to Jesus' true identity as the Son of God because they chose to stubbornly believe what they had always been taught rather than follow God. How can the things we learn from family, school or social media get in the way of discerning what is right and and wrong?

HANDS

Discernment starts when we understand that things aren't always as they seem. The religious leaders asked questions, but they wanted to trap Jesus, not learn from Him. And in your life, how a situation feels isn't always the real story. Before you act, react or *over*react this week, practice this two-step process—ASK, then ACT—to learn discernment.

1. **ASK** Good Questions
    - What actually happened? (Don't rely on someone else's version of events. Get the full story.)
    - What is the context? (Is "what he said" being taken out of context to make it sound bad? Or good?)
    - What does the Bible say about what's going on or about this topic?
    - What is the outcome I want? What outcome do I want to avoid?
2. **ACT** Carefully
    - Don't respond when your emotions are high. Take time to think or get advice about what to do.
    - Pause before you post. Remember that anything you post online will be online forever.
    - Go to those involved directly, if possible. Talking to other people about what happened never solves the real problem.
    - Pray and ask God to help you be discerning and make wise choices.

JESUS SHARES THE LORD'S SUPPER

Luke 22:14–23

JESUS SHARES THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord's Supper points to Jesus' sacrifice for sins.

JESUS CONNECTION

Long before Jesus came, God made a covenant with Israel that they would worship only Him. Every year, they offered a lamb as the sacrifice for all the ways they did not keep God's covenant. But that sacrifice pointed to a future day when God would establish a new covenant with His people. At the Last Supper, Jesus revealed that He would sacrifice His life to establish this new covenant forever.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

SACRIFICE – Giving of myself to help someone else.

HEAD

Why did the Jewish people celebrate the Passover every year?

How is the Last Supper a picture of Jesus' sacrifice for us?

HEART

God instructed Israel to eat the Passover meal to remind them of how God rescued them from slavery in Egypt. Jesus told the disciples this Last Supper would be a reminder of a greater rescue—His death for our sins. Why was it necessary for Jesus to be the sacrifice for sins? Why couldn't we pay for our own sins?

Jesus paid the price to redeem us from our sins with His body and blood on the cross. Why is this such an amazing sacrifice? What response should this kind of sacrifice inspire in us?

HANDS

Sacrifice isn't pretty or easy. It is inconvenient and uncomfortable, but it's the way Jesus lived. He invites us to give of ourselves for others as He did—not just people we like, but strangers and even our enemies. We can sacrifice our time, energy, possessions and money for those who are hurting, lonely or needy. Pick one area—home, school, a group or activity you belong to or a local community group—and think of 1–2 practical ways you can sacrifice for those people this week. Pray and ask God to give you the desire and the strength to do them and then put them into practice this week.

JESUS IS ARRESTED

Jesus was sent by the Father to face judgment for our sins.

JESUS CONNECTION

In the garden of Eden, Adam failed to resist the serpent and chose instead to follow his way over God's. In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus, the second Adam, submitted fully to His Father's purpose and plan and willingly submitted to death on the cross. Jesus demonstrated His identity as the Son of God through both His words and actions when He was betrayed, arrested and put on trial.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

SUBMISSION – Choosing to be under the authority of others.

HEAD

Describe Jesus' emotions as He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Jesus asked God to "take this cup away from Me" because He didn't want to go through the pain of the cross. How did Jesus show He was still willing to follow God's plan even though it was hard?

HEART

Jesus submitted completely to God's plan to save us through His death on the cross because He trusted the Father completely. How might knowing God's character and trusting His goodness help you submit to God the same way?

Because Jesus did not demand His own way and was willing to die on the cross, we can be saved. How might demanding our own way to protect ourselves actually hurt or cause problems for other people?

HANDS

Submitting is hard for us because we don't want to be forced to do things that are uncomfortable or that go against our own desires and opinions. Write at least one way you could respectfully submit to those in authority in the following situations:

- Your teacher asks the class to get quiet, but you're finishing an important conversation with a friend.
- Your friend invites you to a birthday party and sleepover, but you're the only one who's not allowed to spend the night.
- While you are at the park with friends, they start riding their bikes through the splash pad even though the rules state this isn't allowed.

JESUS IS CRUCIFIED

Mark 15:6, 11–20, 33–39

JESUS IS CRUCIFIED

Jesus willingly took upon Himself the punishment for sin.

JESUS CONNECTION

Jesus willingly took up His cross and suffered the judgment our sins deserve. At the moment He died, the curtain in the temple sanctuary was torn in two, signifying that sinners have access to God through the blood of Christ. The crucifixion of Jesus is the center of history, revealing God's holiness and justice, our sinfulness and unrighteousness and Christ's humility and love.

LIFEWISE QUALITY

FORGIVENESS – Erasing a debt that another person owes me.

HEAD

List some of the things Jesus went through to save us from sin.

How did people respond differently to Jesus during His trial and crucifixion?

HEART

Jesus' death on the cross allows us to experience God's forgiveness. When God chooses to forgive, our sin is erased. He never brings up our sin again or holds it against us, and our relationship with God is made completely right. How is God's forgiveness the same or different from the forgiveness you have experienced and given to others?

Jesus suffered and died at the hands of His enemies, and yet, while nailed to the cross, He said, "Father, forgive them, because they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). What positive results come when we forgive others, even when they don't apologize or understand the hurt they caused?

HANDS

Forgiveness is not a feeling. It's a daily choice we make to let go of our right to punish someone for the pain they have caused us. We choose not to bring up what happened or to blame that person for the past any longer. We may still feel upset, but we can always choose to forgive because Jesus has forgiven us of all things (Ephesians 4:32). Think of at least one person you feel has wronged you (or someone you care about) in some way and go through the following steps.

- Make a list of ways this person has wronged you.
- Write down anything you have done to punish this person for the pain he or she has caused.
- Make the choice to forgive what this person has done. Say out loud, "I choose to forgive [name]" every day this week.
- Pray that God would heal your emotions as you make the choice to forgive this person every day.